In recent ecocritical thought, the question of the relationship between literature and knowledge has gained new urgency: Calls for an all-encompassing “unity” of knowledge as a form of cross-disciplinary “consilience” (E. O. Wilson) are countered by opposite claims of a vital diversity of functionally different and epistemologically complementary cultures of knowledge. In the perspective of cultural ecology, it is the double orientation on the poles of connectivity and diversity which constitutes a space of transdisciplinary knowledge that is a special domain and potential of imaginative literature. Literary stagings of human existence provide a testing-ground for literary and cultural theory, but they are also important sources of knowledge in their own right.

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